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ABSTRACT

Current demographic statistics indicate that a nation within a nation is emerging: Mexican Americans, numbering 12 million in 1978, must be dealt with educationally, economically, socially, and politically. Approximately 42% of Mexican Americans are under 18 years old. Hispanic students form the largest ethnic minority population (34%) in the Los Angeles Unified School District. However, in 1978, 17.2% of Hispanics 25 years old and over had completed less than 5 years of school compared to 3% of non-Hispanic persons, and only 40.8% of Hispanics 25 years old and over had completed 4 years of high school compared to 67.1% of non-Hispanics. Reinforcing the well established correlation between years of education and annual income, the average Hispanic family income in 1977 was $11,421 compared to $16,284 for a non-Hispanic family. Hispanic families living below the poverty level comprised 21.4% of the population compared to 8.7% of non-Hispanics. To reduce the poverty and insufficient education that are major barriers to economic growth and access to full opportunity, objectives for the education of Mexican Americans during the 1980's should be to reverse the school drop-out rate, to make the curricula relevant and meaningful according to the child's needs, to be ready to educate and employ the increasing number of Hispanics, and to develop interviewing techniques to screen in instead of screen out potential employees. (NEC)

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CHICANO EDUCATION: CLEARER OBJECTIVES AND BETTER RESULTS

Paper Presented By:

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American Association of School Administrators Convention

Anaheim, California

February 17, 1980

CHICANO EDUCATION: CLEARER OBJECTIVES AND BETTER RESULTS

Education is generally treated and considered to be the simple exchange of knowledge from the teacher to the student and limited to the classroom. This simple narrow point of view concerns me very much because education is so much broader and so complex. I see it as a total life experience. Consequently I would like to approach this topic "Chicano Education: Clearer Objectives and Better Results" from this broad complex perspective, because Chicano education in particular is not simple, in fact very complex and very complicated. The analysis of the problem is simple, and so is the solution, but the implementation is very difficult if not impossible. It reminds me of the Nazi wolf packs in the North Atlantic during the early years of World War II. The German submarines were sinking every ship in sight so that very few of our ships, loaded with precious materials, were reaching our allies. The problem was simple and obvious, the solution was also simple, as one official in a high office stated, "Just heat the ocean so much that the water will boil and the German submarines will burn." So is the situation and the problems of the Chicano. The problems are not that difficult to identify, unless you're one of those with tunnel vision and blinders that can't see the trees for the forest. The solution doesn't seem that difficult, but the imple-

mentation is the big problem as with the German submarines.

As we enter the new decade of the eighties the Chicano community is embroiled in the whole spectrum of a bitter educational war. The battles include the fight to put a halt to the high drop-out rate of Chicano students, to implement legislation that guarantees equal educational opportunities for bilingual Chicano students, to guarantee equal employment rights and do away with the high unemployment rate among Chicanos, and many more. The task of predicting the future relative to these issues is not so difficult. These are the same issues of the past, and it is safe to assume they will continue to exist at least through this new decade, depending on the course of action that Chicanos will take.

A survey done in 1978 shows that 17.2 percent Spanish origin persons twenty-five years old and over completed less than five years of school compared to 3.0 percent of non-Spanish origin persons. The survey also indicates that there were 40.8 percent Spanish origin persons twenty-five years old and over who completed four years of high school compared to 67.1 percent of non-Spanish origin persons. U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 328, "Persons of Spanish Origin in the United States: March 1978, Page 7." The survey clearly documents that Chicanos are not staying

in school. The same survey shows that Chicanos are not employed proportionately in the professional work force, that only 24.1 percent of the male persons of Spanish origin sixteen years old or over are employed as white collar workers compared to 42.9 perecent of the non-Spanish origin male persons. It is a well established fact that there is a direct correlation between years of education and annual income or lifetime earnings. The fact is that Chicanos have not been provided an equal educational opportunity and it reflects in their annual income. The average family income in 1977 of a Spanish origin family was $11,421 compared to $16,284 for non-Spanish origin family, according to the same survey. Another discouraging statistic is the fact that 21.4 percent of Spanish origin families live below the poverty level compared to only 8.7 percent non-Spanish origin families. Even though Chicanos are disproportionately living below the poverty level, they are reluctant to seek welfare aid. A 1977 study conducted in California by International Technical Services reported that "It takes a crisis to get most Spanish speaking persons to turn to a public agency for help. They would turn to their families rather than public agencies in time of need." Given these statistics it can be concluded that poverty and insufficient education are major barriers to economic growth and access to full opportunity. These con-

ditions cannot be ignored much longer, particularly when we examine the following current demographic statistics according to the U.S. Bureau of Census March 1978:

1. There are 12 million persons in the United States who reported that they were of Spanish origin.
2. Approximately 42 percent of all persons of Spanish origin were under eighteen years old compared with 29 percent of persons not of Spanish origin.
3. In the Spring of 1976 there were an estimated 3,521,925 students of Spanish origin.
4. In California public schools between 1967 and 1977 there was an increase of 275,887 students of Spanish origin and a decrease of 585,833 Anglo students.
5. Students of Spanish origin constitute the largest ethnic minority population (approximately 34.8 percent, or 203,743 students) in Los Angeles Unified School District, the second largest school district in the country.

A nation within a nation is emerging as the statistics clearly testify, a fact that Chicanos must be dealt with educationally, economically, socially, politically and basically in every aspect. This phenomenon has been recognized and addressed with feature articles in The Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, Time, Newsweek, New West and Nuestro.

Before I go any further, some terms need to be clarified. I have been using the terms Chicano and Spanish speaking interchangeably as one and the same. However, in reality a movement is emerg-

ing towards a common identity of Chicanos, Latins, Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, Boriquas, Cubans, etc., as Hispanics. Agreement of acceptance that regardless of country of origin, Spanish speaking peoples have basically the same background, culture, language, etc., consequently the same problems and needs. There is no need to struggle separately in a parallel direction for the same cause, or to fight against each other for the same bone. Collectively, through a united effort and use of resources, there is a greater probability of resolving common problems. Therefore, the emergence of the term Hispanic, and I may say it is about time. So, from now on, in reference to this paper, I'll use the term Hispanic.

In the political environment, as the decade of the eighties begins, the Hispanic is very conspicuous by its absence and lack of representation at all levels of government, particularly in policy making boards. The present governance systems are predominately Anglo-American, male and middle-class, which historically have not been supportive of Hispanic educational and political needs. However, there is optimism that a period of change has emerged and a transition is underway to correct this condition. The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) contends that the Hispanic community will be a key force in the Presidential primaries

of 1980 and a crucial factor in the November general elections. To support this statement the following figures are presented:

FACT

If we look at the eight states where close to 90 percent of the national Hispanic population is concentrated, we come up with the following figures:*

HISPANIC VOTERS CONCENTRATED IN THE FOLLOWING KEY STATES

STATE	HISPANIC REG. VOTERS 11-76	HISPANIC VOTES CAST 11-76	REGISTERED PERCENT HISPANIC VOTING	1976 WINNING PLURALITY FOR PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES
Arizona	92.500	58.300	63 percent	133.040 (R)
California	715.600	522.400	73 percent	139.060 (R)
Colorado	81.000	60.000	74 percent	123.477 (R)
Florida	248.250	186.000	75 percent	166.469 (D)
Illinois	132.000	104.280	79 percent	101.681 (R)
New Mexico	135.200	97.300	72 percent	10.271 (R)
New York	416.000	312.000	75 percent	288.767 (D)
Texas	488.000	278.200	57 percent	129.019 (D)
TOTAL Hispanic Vote in the US in 1976 Elections	2.308.550	1.618.480		

FACT

Hispanics comprise a significant "swing" vote in each of these states. A below-average turnout, or conversely, a higher-than-average turnout, would have incredible impacts on Presidential candidates. As a whole these states have a total of 189 electoral votes. Hispanic turnout in each state becomes a factor to contend with for each Presidential candidate, who will either court or ignore our community, depending on the candidate's campaign.

* SOURCE: *Andrew Hernandez, The Latino Vote in the 1976 Presidential Election, 2nd Ed., Southwest Voter Registration Education Project for 1977.*

The practices of employment of Hispanics continues to be in a sad condition. While there have been major advances in the hiring practices of women and other minorities, the Hispanic, the second largest minority group, has made the smallest gains in employment. I will not repeat endless lists of statistics that we've all seen during the past few years. It's enough to say that in general, Hispanics represent 10 percent of the total work force, yet at best, Hispanic participation is 5 percent of those employed or 50 percent of the Hispanic work force. Moreover, the major part of those Hispanics employed are in the lowest paying jobs. It can be said that the over-representation of Hispanics in the low paying jobs is because of the large number of jobs, the undocumented alien impact and stereotyping of Hispanics, the requirement of minimum qualifications and the limited knowledge of the system. While the high paying skilled jobs are fewer in number, there are less qualified Hispanics, there is a lack of visability of Hispanics, and a perpetuation of exclusion of Hispanios in promotions.

As "Champions of Learning" we need to bring attention to the "Undocumented Alien (Taxpayer)" and present the facts. The following information was taken from actual reports compiled by teams

of the Boards of Supervisors of Orange, Los Angeles and San Diego Counties:

	Taxes Paid	Medical Treatment Received	Population
. Orange County	$145,340,720	$ 2,600,000	100,000 (1
. Los Angeles County	171,948,000	$67,072,000	100,000 (2
. San Diego County	6,768,000	513,063	250,000 (3
	$324,056,720	$80,185,063	450,000

(1: March 1978
(2: March 1975
(3: Nov. 1975

All three studies concluded that Undocumented Workers do pay taxes. The Orange County Study suggests that undocumented workers are very likely to pay more in taxes than they use in tax-supported public social services. THEY ARE NOT, ACCORDING TO EVIDENCE, A BURDEN TO TAXPAYERS. Quite the contrary, they (the undocumented) really subsidize the American citizens' public social service programs by simply paying a great deal more than they receive in taxes vs services.

The Bureau of the Census will start making the 1980 count in in about a month from now. Over one-hundred Federal Agencies use census data in their formulas for the distribution of $50 billion tax dollars. These tax dollars return to our communities for many programs of which education is one. In the 1970 census, according to a suit against the Census Bureau and filed by the Mexican Ameri-

can Legal Defense Fund (MALDEF), which resulted in an admission by the Census Bureau, California's Hispanics were undercounted by approximately 643,000 persons. If we were to multiply the tax dollars by the number of persons they represent, times 10, the number of years (1979-80), we can understand how important it is that everyone is counted.

So it remains that for us, as "Champions of Learning," objectives regarding the education of Chicanos/Hispanics are quite clear as follows:

1. To reverse the school drop-out rate. Keep the children in school where they can have a better chance of learning.
2. To make the curricula relevant and meaningful according to the child's needs, particularly the limited and non-English speaker.
3. To be ready to educate and employ the increasing number of Hispanics.
4. To develop interviewing techniques to screen in instead of screen out potential employees.
5. To be represented in elected positions at all levels of government through political action and astuteness.
6. To present the true facts regarding the undocumented aliens.
7. To make sure that everyone is counted in the 1980 census.

The results will be better, depending on what we do about it.